

REMARKS

Claims 1-15 are pending. By this Response, claims 1, 2, 8 and 9 are amended. Reconsideration and allowance based on the above-amendments and following remarks are respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Kent, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,554,489); Claims 2-8 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kent in view of Rogers (U.S. Patent No. 6,236,795) and claims 9-15 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kent in view of Rogers and Brownjohn (U.S. Patent No. 5,212,751). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

The Office Action alleges that Kent teaches the essential features of applicant's independent claims. Further, the Office Action provides Kent to teach the claimed shoulder within the central channel, as was recited in claim 8 and which feature has been amended into the independent claims. Applicants respectfully disagree with the allegations made in the Office Action.

The Office Action alleges that the claimed shoulder is taught in Kent by the securing elements 38, 238a, and 338a. Applicant respectfully submits that these elements of Kent are gripping elements similar to the projections 28 disclosed in Fig. 3A of applicant's invention. These projection features do not provide a shoulder as claimed by applicant.

As seen in Figs. 1-5 of Kent, the connector boot is secured to the fiber cable guide by using primary and secondary securing elements 30 and 38. See column 5, lines 29-32 and column 6, lines 47-50. These securing elements are found on the top of the sidewalls and extend over the sidewalls in a C shape that provides a gripping action for the boot when inserted in the fiber optic cable guide. See Figs. 1-5 of Kent. Securing elements 238 and 338 function the same as securing elements 30 and 38.

Applicants shoulder feature of the independent claims is provided within the channel. The shoulder creates a narrower passage way in the channel starting at a predetermined distance from the second end. The characteristic of the shoulder creates a thicker sidewall such that at the junction between the channel and sidewall the shoulder extends from the sidewall. Thus, when a boot is inserted into the second end, the boot will abut against the shoulder walls that extend from the channel at the predetermined distance from the second end. This ensures that the boot does not extend further into the channel of the tubular main body than the predetermined distance.

Further, Rodgers and Brownjohn fail to make up for the deficiencies of Kent. Rodgers provides teachings of a fiber optic cable distribution frame assembly and Brownjohn provides teaches of a screening arrangement for attachment to a connector for fiber optics. Neither of these two references teach or suggest an optical fiber bending apparatus including a shoulder as claimed by applicant.

In view of the above, applicant respectfully submits that Kent alone or in combination with Rodgers and/or Brownjohn fail to teach or suggest, *inter alia*, a shoulder in the central channel predetermined distance from the second end, the shoulder creating two ledges that extend the length of the channel walls and extend a predetermined distance away from the channel walls, as recited in independent claims 1, 2 and 9. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

Conclusion

For at least these reasons, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1-15 are distinguishable over the cited art. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.


Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Chad J. Billings (Reg. No. 48,917) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

Appl. No. 10/698,626

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachment(s)